

On Wednesday, June 20, at 2:00 pm, in 2247 Rayburn, the Subcommittee held a hearing on Inspectors General: Independence and Accountability.

This hearing reviewed how Inspectors General in federal departments and agencies can maintain independence from political pressure, whether IGs have the resources and authority required to fulfill their duties, and how Inspectors General who fail to perform with integrity can be held accountable. The hearing discussed H.R. 928, the Improving Government Accountability Act, sponsored by Rep. Jim Cooper.

Chairman Edolphus Towns said:

“To effectively carry out their mission, Inspectors General must be independent and objective, which requires that they be insulated from improper management and political pressure. To preserve the credibility of the office, Inspectors General must also perform their duties with integrity and apply the same standards of conduct and accountability to themselves as they apply to the agencies that they audit and investigate.”

“In recent years, there have been several episodes which raise questions about the independence and accountability of I.G.s. We have compiled a [report](#) for the record that documents some of these episodes, many of which have been in the press recently.

Today, we want to look at some of the common problems that these cases identify, and how we can fix them.

Does lack of input into budget decisions threaten the independence of I.G.s?

Is there a consistent and credible process for investigating allegations of wrongdoing against I.G.s?

What is the proper relationship between the head of a federal agency and the inspector general?”

In connection with the hearing, Chairman Towns issued a [fact sheet](#) detailing recent situations that raise questions about the independence and accountability of Inspectors General. This fact

sheet describes incidents at NASA, Department of Commerce, Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, Environmental Protection Agency, General Services Administration, Legal Services Corporation, Smithsonian Institution, Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Health and Human Services, and U.S. Postal Service.

Documents and Links

- [Testimony of Clay Johnson](#)
- [Testimony of Phyllis Fong](#)
- [Testimony of Christine Boesz](#)
- [Testimony of Eleanor Hill](#)
- [Testimony of Kenneth Mead](#)
- [Testimony of Nikki Tinsley](#)
- [Testimony of Jeffrey Steinhoff](#)
- [Testimony of Vanessa Burrows](#)
- [Inspectors General Fact Sheet](#)
- [Official Hearing Transcript and Record \(link to GPO\)](#)